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# Nutrition Nuggets

## January: Thyroid Awareness Month

Did you know that abnormal thyroid functions can be a result of malnutrition? As a concerned parent, you are sensitive to the nutritional needs of your child, and that includes avoiding risk factors that could lead to malnutrition. Understanding the major causes of malnutrition can help you form good habits when it comes to your own health as a parent, as well as the health of your child.

### What is Malnutrition?

Malnutrition, at its core, is a dietary deficiency that results in poor health conditions. We typically think of malnutrition as it relates to children not eating enough of the right foods. It can also occur when children eat too much of the wrong foods. Sadly, these combined contribute to more than 170 million children failing to reach their full potential due to poor nutrition. These are two major factors that contribute to malnutrition in children.

**Poor Quality of Diet:** Malnutrition can occur in children of all ages, but young children are the most vulnerable. The World Health Organization has stated that malnutrition is the single most dangerous threat to global public health. They estimate that malnutrition is the underlying cause of 3.1 million child deaths each year and leads to lasting damage for millions of other children. Malnutrition makes children more vulnerable to severe diseases. Chronic malnutrition or stunting when children are too short for their age because they have not been adequately nourished, received inadequate care and or live in unhygienic environments can leave a devastating and permeant impact on a child's physical and cognitive capabilities.

**Poor Maternal Health:** The largest window of opportunity for a child's health occurs in the first 1,000 days, from the start of a woman's pregnancy to her child's second birthday. Mothers who are malnourished during their pregnancy can experience complications giving birth. Many children are born small because their mothers are undernourished. Severely malnourished mothers can also have trouble breastfeeding their infants. We know that breastfeeding for the first six months of a child's life has health benefits that extend into adulthood. However, if a mother is too malnourished to breastfeed, these health benefits may not be passed on and a child can be at risk for malnutrition.

## Thyroid Disease in Children

While thyroid disease most often develops during adulthood, it can occur in infants, children, and teenagers as well. The symptoms of thyroid disease in children may be hard to recognize because many changes in appetite, sleep patterns, emotions, and energy levels are all also experienced as part of normal development during these years. Thyroid disease during infancy, which is usually identified through newborn screening tests, is not common. After infancy, your child might not have thyroid tests unless you mention symptoms of thyroid disease to his or her pediatrician. Some of these symptoms can affect your child's growth, health, mood, ability to concentrate and learn, short stature or slow growth, rough or dry skin, constipation, cold intolerance, fatigue and decreased energy, sleeping more, bruising easily, bone fractures or delayed bone age on X-ray, and delayed puberty. This is why it is so important to start healthy eating habits young so that we can always protect our children as well as the ones in your care.

[www.savethechildren.org](http://www.savethechildren.org)  
[www.verywellhealth.com](http://www.verywellhealth.com)



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## Chicken Tortilla Soup

1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 large jalapeno pepper, diced  
32 ounces low sodium chicken broth  
15 ounce can black beans, drained and rinsed  
1 teaspoon chili powder & cumin  
1 cup corn, drained  
1/4 cup cilantro, chopped

1 yellow onion, chopped  
3 garlic cloves, peeled and finely minced  
14.5 cans diced tomatoes and juice  
2 skinless and boneless chicken breasts  
1 lime juiced  
tortilla chips  
1 avocado

Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion, garlic and jalapeno and cook until softened. Add remaining ingredients and simmer 20 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Remove chicken and shred. Add back to pot and simmer 3 minutes. Spoon soup into bowls and top with lime wedges, tortilla chips and avocado.



[www.spendwithpennies.com](http://www.spendwithpennies.com)

## Announcements

### State Meal Reimbursement

As some of you may remember, Day Care Homes used to receive additional funds from the state of California to help offset the cost of food. This funding has been reinstated! The California State Budget 2021-22, page 80, per the California Department of Finance's web page, includes \$15 million General Fund for the Child and Adult Care Food Program to restore the state reimbursement match for the meal programs effective: July 01, 2021. As of July 01, 2021, Day Care Homes (DCH) will receive state meal reimbursement of \$0.972825 for 75 percent of breakfasts and lunches served. You were sent the retroactive funds for July through September on December 17, 2021. The funds will be combined with the federal reimbursement for October 2021 forward.

### Solano Family's Cookbook 2022

For some providers who have been on our program for some time, you may remember we once created a cookbook full of your very own recipes. Solano Family's Food Program & Resources & Referrals are teaming up to collaborate on creating a cookbook in 2022. Later this month, providers will be receiving a constant contact email informing them on how they can participate in the SFCS 2022 Cookbook. All the information they need will be in the email that we will be sending out. We are so excited to finally announce this project and we hope we get many participants to help us cultivate this fun project.

